

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, July 7, 1878, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell. Great Stanmore, Middlesex, Sunday, July 7, 1878. My dear Mrs. Bell:

I hope my long silence has not alarmed you, I am sorry for it, and can only plead the novelty of having a baby in excuse.

You see by the date of this that we are at last out of London, away from the heat and smoke and everlasting rows of buildings — among the hills and green trees of this lovely country. Such a time as we had looking for a place sufficiently near and accessible and yet high and country-like. For a whole month Mamma and Alec, and afterwards Berta and Alec went securing the country around nearly every day. It seemed impossible to find what we wanted, all suitable places were occupied by the owners, and there was no room for us. At last after searching Harron in rain, Alec and Berta found this place, four miles from Harron and on a hill higher than the steeple of Harron Church. We reached here Friday afternoon very comfortably, and my Sister not quite so tired as we had feared, though beside the drive from our house, she had two railway journeys and a long drive of three or four miles from the station to this little country Hotel, Abercorn Arme Hotel. It is so delightful being in the country once more, ever since we have been here we have spent the greater part of the day lying on shawls spread out under the shade of some great tree in the meadow behind the house. Such a cavalcade as we were leaving the house, two hackney cabs and one hansom, containing seven persons including the wee one and no more or less than eighteen parcels and trunks of all sizes and shapes. We have engaged our rooms for a week, but may stay longer if we like the place.

I wish you could see your little granddaughter, she is growing each day better looking and brighter, even Alec who dreads young babies seems fond of her, and has her in his arms

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often. Today he was much pleased because he stopped her crying and kept her quiet by talking and making strange noises to 2 her. She weighed eleven pounds two weeks ago and she certainly has not lost anything since, she is such a fat healthy baby and sleeps soundly all night, only waking for her supper at two or three A. M. She is still dark though much fairer than she was and her brown hair is as thick and much longer than it was. I will send you a bit from the back. Tomorrow she will be two months old.

Did I tell you that Berta was coming to help my Mother with Sister? She has been here nearly a month now and it is certainly delightful to have her with us she is so bright and merry, full of fun and life. My Sister is much better now, the doctor says and we are much encouraged. Still she is yet very weak, and is not allowed to walk more than a few steps at a time. But usually she keeps bright. Alec has not been feeling very happy for the past few days for he has been suffering from a boil which prevented his walking or sitting down comfortably. The doctor warned Alec to be very careful as he feared it might lead to something serious, and for a day or two Alec suffered very much, but now he is getting well. Mr. Veal the landlord seems quite a gentlemanly man and very musical he and Alec are just now having a good time, Alec at the Piano and he at the violin which he says once was David Garrett's. We had quite an excitement this evening. The hotel is built on the side of the hill at the head of the other houses of the village which straggles down the side of the hill, and the macadamized road seems a favorite place for all the bicycle riders around, who hold their feet up and roll along down hill. It happened that one of them lost his control of the thing and fell headlong right in front of the inn. Alec rushed down to help with all my lint and wool, but found the only injuries 3 a bruise over one eye and on one hand. Tomorrow Alec and I are going for a drive to Harrow. Mary Home and Emma are taking care of our house while Bessie is nurse, and a very good one she makes too, as she does everything else. She is very young, younger than I, I think, but strong and very kind and careful of the baby.

Did I ever tell you that Mr. Warner left a month ago. After all Alec did not miss him so much as we feared, he has not had many important letters to write and so has had time for

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experimental work. He has at last found a man to make his models for him, and is happy. The man seems to take pleasure in making his work as satisfactory as possible and I do hope that now Alec will be able to go on with his work quickly.

It is getting late and I have nothing more to say, so Goodnight with love to Mr. Bell, Mary, Louisa, and Lizzie.

Affectionately, Mabel.